

almost invariably forced it way through the joint.

The objects to be attained are, to assure the pipes against compression by increasing their resistance to a lateral, or transverse strain; next to introduce some means of making the joints, which should not be liable to the objections stated above. There is a collateral objection to these pipes, which in some cases assumes a very great importance, but which might also be obviated; namely, that the settlement of the earth round them, when in place, gives rise to a species of friction which destroys the asphaltic coating, and leaves the wrought iron exposed to the action of the salts, and of the moisture of the ground. I have seen some of these pipes at Havre nearly eaten through from the outside, the inside remaining perfect. Should the manufacturers in question remove these objections, they would confer a benefit upon the profession, inasmuch as the pipes in question do not affect the quality of the water like those generally used.

G. R. BURNELL.

ART-EDUCATION FOR THE PEOPLE.

THE people of this country have been long allowed to remain ignorant of the fine arts, and debased, in consequence, of much that highly concerns their knowing. Their treasures, however, should be now open to them, and they should be trained for them by means of artistic discipline being made, henceforward, an important part in the system of our national instruction. In all the public schools and establishments for upraising the popular mind it has been strangely omitted, and is now only beginning to be very feebly and inadequately enforced. It seems hitherto to have been considered as one of those divisions of human attainments too mysterious and sacred to be entered upon by the generality. The beautiful was created for all, although it is true it has been enjoyed only by the few! but civilization must make the knowledge of it universal. It cannot be the exclusive privilege of a class; all the world will one day be its worshippers. But, until this be the case, we shall find the majority of the community will remain sadly deficient in the necessary amount of discrimination of what is true, natural, or beautiful; their sympathy and admiration in presence of monuments of national glory will be dead, and their patriotism will grow cold. With these reasons, we think the subject of art-education is one that ought to have great weight with the political thinker and legislator. Communicate this to the operatives, mechanics, and artisans of the country, for their sakes and for its honour,—for the cause of art and artists: you will improve the condition of the one, and exalt the character of the other; they will commence a mutual existence for each other; artists will be compelled, as they value fame, to produce excellent works, for then no mediocrity will be tolerated by the multitude, nor will they any longer be imposed upon by the accustomed arrogance and flippancy of critics. This set of men, wise in their own generation, will have to be on their guard; and those who have been indifferent about the reputation of others, will have to be careful in future about their own.

F. L.

A STARTLER FOR THE DRAIN-PIPE MAKERS.

THE following are tenders for draining an estate at Kennington-cross, the property of Mr. Henry Bowden: Mr. Rogers, architect. The work consists of nearly 3,000 feet run of tubular socket glazed earthenware pipes, of different sizes, from 4 inch to 15 inch.

Mutter	£1,036	0	0
Lawrence	682	10	0
Payne	658	2	8
Robson	619	13	7
Pauling	613	4	0
Taylor	600	0	0
Macey	568	0	0
Corbett	511	10	2
Preston	447	16	0
Munday	398	11	11
Clement and Stafield	389	0	0
Hill	334	13	2
Jarvis	333	0	0
Dethick	316	0	0
Kelly	274	4	2

THE BIRMINGHAM UNION COM-PETITION.

A PRETTY STATEMENT.

I AM led by the manly and independent manner in which you always advocate fair play, and expose all abuses connected with architectural competitions, but more especially by what you have already published respecting the doings of the Birmingham guardians, to send you some particulars I have received relative to the said board; in order that you may further expose the gross injustice that has been done those architects, who, like myself, were induced by the specious promises and great professions of honesty and fair dealing made by the guardians at the time they issued their conditions and instructions to architects.

From inquiries I have lately made, I now find that the whole affair from beginning to end has been, to say the least of it, a delusion and a snare, and I think you will acknowledge a more disgraceful or dishonest affair never came under your notice, when I tell you I am in possession of information, which not only proves the truth of the statement made by Mr. Brookes as regards Messrs. Drury and Bateman's names being on their drawings, but also confirms the suspicion that two at least out of the three judges were influenced and guided thereby, in the opinion they gave of the designs submitted for them to examine and report upon: in proof of which I would mention the fact that one of them (Mr. Edge) canvassed some of the guardians in favour of Messrs. Drury and Bateman, during the first competition; and that it is currently reported in Birmingham, that another of the judges (Mr. Gibson) is about forming an alliance with the family of one of the successful competitors. I therefore think under these circumstances, that you and every other unprejudiced person will agree, that I, with every other competitor, have good reasons for impugning the disinterestedness of a tribunal so constituted.

In addition to what I have already stated, I have been informed that a large sum of money was spent during the late election of guardians which took place between the first and second competition, to ensure the return of the present members, and although it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to prove that a large portion of it was subscribed by the present successful competitors, yet such I am informed was reported at the time of election, and what serves to confirm this statement, is the fact that nearly, if not quite all their supporters in the first competition, the present chairman of the board amongst the number, were re-elected and the opposing party thrown out; and besides which, it was well known that but few, if any, of the party who took an active part in the election, had sufficient interest for spending money upon such an occasion.

In order to satisfy the competitors and the public at large that the design recommended by the judges, and finally adopted by the guardians and Poor-law Commissioners, does display such superior talent as to require so little difficulty in arriving at a judgment independent of the names of the architects, I would recommend that a public exhibition be made of all the designs sent in; which course, I think, neither the guardians nor the judges they appointed could possibly object to, if their decision has been an honest one. But in case they neglect this means of vindicating their characters, I would then recommend that a meeting of the competitors be called, for the purpose of arranging such exhibition, and forming a committee to make a report thereon, and taking such steps as they may deem advisable. As regards the expenses attending such exhibition, I have no doubt they would be more than covered by making a trifling charge to the public for viewing the same, as I understand the matter excites considerable interest in Birmingham; and should any surplus remain, after paying the expenses, it would serve to make up a fund for the purpose of trying a question at law, whether each competitor is entitled to be paid for his design, provided it can be clearly proved the guardians have broken their contract by not fulfilling the conditions of the competition: or it might be given to some needy and useful charity in the neighbourhood.

I do not wish my name to appear, but I enclose my card as a guarantee of my good faith.

LOVER OF FAIR PLAY.

PARKS FOR THE METROPOLIS.

Something has been said recently in THE BUILDER on the parks. Now, in my opinion, gross negligence has been manifested for the welfare of the inhabitants of this overgrown metropolis, excepting as regards the western portion, and perhaps I should admit the extreme eastern part. In the year 1833 a select committee was appointed in the House of Commons, to consider the propriety of establishing additional public parks and places for exercise. The committee having considered the matter, reported that the number of such places were insufficient then for the requirements of the public, and recommended that *five additional sites* should be appropriated for the establishment of public parks and walks.

Now, Sir, since that period, *sixteen years ago*, what has been done? Victoria Park, such as it is, has been partly formed; and the *very best site* for a public park in the neighbourhood of London, viz., Copenhagen Fields, has been suffered to be entirely destroyed, and almost every footpath in that neighbourhood closed against the public, which, at the time above mentioned, they had full enjoyment of.

Hackney Downs, too,—these would form a noble park. But there are boards up to say that the ground is to be let for building purposes; although I believe it is or was common, or *lanthus land*. But no measures have ever been taken, at least that I am aware of, to secure this beautiful spot for the use of the public.

I do not mean to blame the present Government for all this. Of course they cannot be answerable for the misdeeds of their predecessors. But I must say that I think it very hard, that when the sum of 150,000*l.* should be lavished upon additions (the propriety of which is very questionable) to a single palace, which has already cost no one knows how much, and such immense sums should be expended upon the new Houses of Parliament, so little should have been done for the suffering million. By the suffering million, I mean those poor creatures who are compelled to drag on a miserable existence in the crowded courts and alleys of this bloated city, and who scarcely ever, now, are able to see a green field. I do not mean those who can afford to spend two or three weeks or months at a watering-place every year, nor those who, besides having the enjoyment of the parks at all times at their command, spend a considerable portion of their time at their country seats, but the poor artisan and clerk, who are compelled to toil from year's end to year's end in the close workshop and counting-house for the means of subsistence.

The builders are not blameless in this matter, for the reckless way in which they have covered every available spot of ground without reservation; and this they will find out the error of before long, or I am very much mistaken. The better class of houses, that is, houses of from 50*l.* a-year and upwards, do not let now so well as they used to do. Those parties who can afford it are beginning to move off a little way into the country, along the different lines of railway. I know three or four instances of this within these last twelve months. One party has gone to reside at Sydenham, from the neighbourhood of Clouder-square, Islington, and the other two to Pengo, on the Croydon line, from Myddleton-square. Now, as new lines of railway are opened, and the facilities for residing a short distance from town increase, so will the houses in the suburbs be deserted by the most respectable tenants, and the depreciation of house property in these neighbourhoods be beyond all calculation; and, in the end, the consequences will fall upon the heads of those by whose means and connivance it was brought about.

J. C. P.

ENFORCEMENT OF CLEANLINESS IN DWELLINGS.—The corporation of Brussels, and several other large Belgian cities, have determined, it is said, forcibly to close all houses left uncleaned, and to stick on the door a bill bearing the words "interdicted house."